

Celebrity Buzz

SJP fears losing fortune in split

pg 18



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See Page 10!

Cherry can't get teen's job back

CONTROVERSY Don Cherry may talk a good game but he couldn't budge Billy's banishers.

The vociferous hockey commentator tried to get 17-year-old Billy Steele's job back as a volunteer cameraman at Oshawa's General Motors Centre, but it was no dice, Cherry said yesterday.

"We had a long talk. I did my best — that's all you can do."

Billy was banned by the arena's operator, Global Spectrum, from working on Rogers TV broadcasts there after he chatted with Cherry at an event three weeks ago.

Public support for Billy has been "overwhelming," said the teen's father, Bill Steele. When the two of them handed out 1,000 protest flyers at an Oshawa Generals game last Sunday, he said only one person was heard to back Global Spectrum, a subsidiary of Philadelphia-based Comcast-Spectacor.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

ShareYourViews

halifaxletters@metronews.ca

Sports pg 9

Crookshank reinstated

Metro Homes pg 10



Walk all over it



Please recycle

Weather Another winter wallop



Patrick Ferguson, an employee at Hillcrest Volkswagen, clears the ice and snow from a new car on the dealership's lot yesterday. Today's forecast calls for a 60 per cent chance of flurries in the morning with a high of -10 C.

Festival needs help

Tall Ships event organizers seeking volunteers

PAUL MCLEOD
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The largest Tall Ships festival in almost a decade is coming to Halifax this summer, but organizers need to double their volunteers to make it happen.

Between 40 and 50 tall ships will come this July 16 to 20, bringing more than 2,000 crew and up to one million visitors.

The bigger size means more volunteers are needed, and currently the festival has 400 of its needed

800 to 1,000 people. Organizers are hoping people will go to tallshipsnovascotia.com to sign up.

"This is the 25th anniversary of Tall Ships actually occurring here. It was 1984 when it first happened," said Waterfront Development Corp. president Colin MacLean.

"To be in this place and have this connection to the international community is just very, very exciting."

Ships will be coming from 30 countries, including France, the United States, Italy, Germany, Belgium, Poland, Spain,

"(This year), there are more ships, more crew and more to do."

Leanne Strathdee, festival director

Netherlands and the U.K.

The 2007 festival generated \$27.5 million in economic benefits for the province, including \$2.5 million in provincial tax. The 2007 event drew between 30 and 35 ships, mostly from North America.

This year's event will be bigger. Aside from more ships overall, there will also be about 15 of the largest, Class A ships. In 2007 there

were less than five.

Atlantic Superstore has donated \$100,000 to cover the cost of volunteer meals for the event.

"We had a great turnout (last year) with volunteers. We had over 600 participate," said festival director Leanne Strathdee.

"(This year), there are more ships, more crew and more to do."

MORE COVERAGE PG 2

Obama sets salary caps

ECONOMY U.S. President Barack Obama took on bailed-out Wall Street firms yesterday, setting a \$500,000 annual cap on executive pay for companies getting taxpayer funds and tapping popular anger over financial sector excesses.

Obama said more such measures were planned in efforts to overhaul the crisis-hit U.S. financial sector that has been bailed out with billions of dollars of public funds.

He won support in Washington, including from some Republicans who were critical of the financial sector bailout in the first place. But Wall Street critics said the pay cap was a political gambit that could prompt a talent flight from affected firms.

Obama, a Democrat who succeeded Republican George W. Bush two weeks ago, said his administration would not allow public money to be wasted on payouts for corporate CEOs whose businesses spurred the financial and economic crisis.

"In order to restore our financial system, we've got to restore trust. And in order to restore trust, we've got to make certain that taxpayer funds are not subsidizing excessive compensation packages on Wall Street," Obama said.

"For top executives to award themselves these kinds of compensation packages in the midst of this economic crisis is not only bad taste — it's bad strategy — and I will not tolerate it as president."

REUTERS



Obama

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Local



Do Atlantic Canadians like paying taxes?

We must, according to a new H&R Block survey: Only 27 per cent of us claimed any of the new 2007 tax credits when we did our taxes last year. They're more savvy out West: 42 per cent of tax filers from Alberta, Manitoba and Saskatchewan claimed things like the transit pass credit or the children's fitness credit.

METRO HALIFAX

Bars hurt by snow, parking, as much as economy: Syperek

PAUL MCLEOD

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Halifax bar baron Victor Syperek says this is the worst winter for business he's seen in his 14 years in Halifax.

Syperek, who owns downtown bars such as the Economy Shoe Shop, the Seahorse and The Press Gang, says business is down about 10 per cent over last year.

And he's not just blaming bad economic times. He says snowstorms and an over-zealous "parking Gestapo" enforcing the winter parking ban are killing down-

town bars.

"I wouldn't say it's the economic downturn, I'd say it's this idiotic city dealing with snow," said Syperek.

"I understand snow removal is an important thing, but they go around putting tickets on every car even when there's no snowplows around. And they forget why they're clearing the roads; it's so we can have business downtown. Yet they do their best to discourage it."

Syperek said other downtown bars are potentially doing much worse than his, but he hopes a busy summer period can make up for lost revenue.

Native band seeks funding, help in suicide 'crisis'

ESKASONI A Cape Breton Mi'kmaq band is appealing for help after another young person in the First Nation community committed suicide.

Still grieving from three suicides since December, residents of Eskasoni learned Tuesday that another person had killed himself.

"We do have a problem and it's something we need to address," said Jaime Battiste, an adviser to the Eskasoni chief and council. "We're all trying to figure out what we can do right now and we're all kind of stunned and shocked at the same time."

There have now been five suicides and five drug-and-alcohol-related deaths in Eskasoni since early 2008.

In a letter to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs obtained by the Cape Breton Post, Eskasoni Chief Charlie Dennis called the situation a crisis, and asked for government help.

The youth crisis shelter at the Eskasoni Health Centre currently can't afford to provide programs for young people.

Battiste said the group will be seeking ways to get funding for a suicide prevention program.

THE CAPE BRETON POST



Leanne Strathdee, Tall Ships Nova Scotia Festival 2009 director, announces details yesterday of the event running from July 16 to 20. The festival will attract 40 to 50 ships, 2,000 crew and an expected one million visitors to Halifax. Strathdee also put out a call for volunteers.

Want a hotel room in July? Book soon

PAUL MCLEOD

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Tall ships and long tongues are expected to draw so many people to Halifax this summer that hotel rooms will be hard to find.

The recently announced Kiss concert happens to fall over the week of the 2009 Tall Ships festival, which is expecting to bring up to one million visitors.

It's only been a couple days since the Kiss announcement, but it's al-

ready caused a spike in hotel bookings.

"We have people calling looking for rooms for the concert. Also there's more people calling for Tall Ships, presumably because

they heard about the concert and wanted to guarantee rooms by booking early," said Barry Walsh, reservation manager for the Lord Nelson Hotel.

Walsh said the hotel was already expecting occupancy to be high in that period before the Kiss concert, but now every hotel across the city is getting close to being booked. He said people who plan on renting a room should do it soon.

Promoter Harold MacKay announces the Kiss concert on the Common on Tuesday.



metronews.ca

WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video High school students given the chance to take groundbreaking course on genocide at

metronews.ca
/canada
Blog Hollywood Rants reimagines Christian Bale's movie-set tirade at

Lotteries

Lotto 6/49: 15, 16, 22, 31, 43 & 44 Bonus 32
These results are not official.

Backyard fowl fight coming home to roost

JON TATTRIE

for Metro Halifax

Chickens are coming home to roost at Peninsula Community Council next week. Halifax drew national attention last February when Edinburgh Street resident Louise Hanavan was told her backyard fowl had to go.

City staff have been working on a report since then and councillors Jennifer Watts, Dawn Sloane, Jerry Blumenthal and Sue Uteck will examine it Monday night.

Hanavan is discouraged that the report recommends no action due to what it calls a lack of public interest.

"There were 1,000 signatures on that petition (gathered last year)," Hanavan said yesterday. She added many people want chickens for green reasons: To shrink their carbon footprint and to save money. "Especially in hard economic times, it makes sense to know you have that source of food."

The original complaint stemmed from a fear that chicken feed attracted rats. Hanavan's chickens are long

Meeting

- Peninsula Community Council meets at 7 p.m. Monday at city hall.

gone, but the vermin aren't. "I can say that a year later, there are still rats in our neighbourhood."

Jennifer Watts, councillor for Connaught-Quinpool, supports "urban agriculture" in the form of community gardens and is open to discuss backyard chickens.

"I've had several people contact me about their in-

terest in having a bylaw that would support (backyard chickens) ... and I've also had people definitely approach me to say they're not in favour," Watts said.

The Ecology Action Centre is urging change.

"Producing one's own food improves quality of life, as it brings a sense of abundance, self-sufficiency and connection to the land," said Nicole Arsenault. "It is very disappointing that this type of productive urban land use, especially on such a small scale, is being so actively discouraged by the city."

Parolee can't sue over allegations

RACHEL BOOMER

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COURT A federal offender whose parole was suspended after he was charged with a crime he didn't commit has lost his bid to sue.

Bryston David Turner complained that in March 2003, his parole officer essentially made him a suspect in a series of sexual assaults and robberies in Halifax mall parking lots. At the time, Turner was on parole for drug charges. Halifax Regional Police were looking for a suspect who was approaching women in mall parking lots, claiming their cars needed fixing, then sexually assaulting and robbing them.

The parole officer mentioned Turner because of his mechanical skills, and told the police she thought Turner had taken money for a car repair he didn't complete. It turned out that wasn't accurate. The parole officer also didn't tell the police Turner didn't look like the suspect.

Turner was charged March 14, 2003, with robbery, sexual assault and kidnapping. His parole was suspended. When a senior parole officer investigated his case, though, he determined Turner had done the mechanical work, and reported that to police.

The charges were withdrawn April 11. Turner's parole was reinstated that day.

Lawyer Mark Knox argued that by passing along inaccurate information, Turner's parole officer didn't do her job impartially and diligently, as she was required to do. He argued the Correctional Service of Canada owed Turner a duty of care.

But Nova Scotia Supreme Court Justice Arthur Pickup ruled its only duty is to protect the public, and it doesn't have a duty to protect parolees from being falsely accused of crimes.

"There is potential for conflict should such a duty be found," Pickup wrote in his decision, released yesterday.

Turner must now pay Ottawa \$750 in costs.

NDP wants quicker updates on tar ponds

The NDP says the Tar Ponds Agency isn't letting people know quickly enough when something goes on with the cleanup. Cape Breton Nova MLA Gordie Gosse says the agency should post problems on its website. **METRO HALIFAX**

local 3

Make a healthy workplace

Happy workers are more productive, expert says

JON TATTRIE
for Metro Halifax

Working in a time of lay-offs and cutbacks is stressful for employees. But experts say keeping the workplace psychologically healthy is good for the bottom line.

"A lot of companies say, 'We don't have a lot of money; why should we be worrying about this?'" Arla Day, chair of the Psychologically Healthy Workplace Committee in Nova Scotia, said yesterday. She argues it doesn't have to cost a lot to create a happy workplace and can benefit staff and employers.

Her organization has recognized three employers for creating happy, healthy workplaces. "It costs nothing to treat people with respect, to listen to employees and have them involved," Day added.

Mentally healthy employees are more productive and take fewer sick days. A good work environment cuts down on turnover, saving the company recruiting money.



Amanda Mombourquette, left, and Dawne Miller, employees at the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia, are pictured at work yesterday. The college is receiving a psychologically healthy workplace award from Saint Mary's University.

"There is a business case for developing healthy workplaces," Day said. "Spending the money upfront may seem risky, but the payback is great."

Open-door policies, seeking employee feedback and offering flextime were some of the ways the top companies improved their workplaces.

The three winners were the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Nova Scotia,

the Staples Contact Centre in Lower Sackville and N.B. Power.

The college was the overall winner. It offers staff a "lunch and learn" series on health and wellness, provides flextime and summer hours, professional leave, and helps workers quit smoking. It also offers free and confidential psychological services, tuition reimbursement, fitness allowance

and cross-training opportunities.

Speaking for the college, Dawn Miller said a lot of factors went into winning the award. The college invests in its employees, and that motivates staff to return the favour.

"It makes them feel, 'This is what (the organization) is doing for me, so I will give the extra 100 per cent to the organization,'" she said.

Foul play ruled out in man's death

NEWCOMBVILLE RCMP in Lunenburg County have ruled out foul play in Tuesday's death of a 49-year-old man in Newcombville.

Police and emergency responders were called to a home at 12:16 p.m. Tuesday, where they found the man unresponsive. An autopsy yesterday ruled out foul play.

METRO HALIFAX

Street fundraising bylaw nixed

PAUL MCLEOD
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Council has decided against a bylaw allowing fundraising on streets.

Charities such as Dalhousie's annual Shinerama campaign had hoped a bylaw would allow them to collect money from motorists stopped at red lights.

They used to be able to, but a recent provincial law banned collecting money on roadways. The law was supposed to target panhandlers, and it offered a loophole to municipalities where they use a bylaw to exempt charities.

But that won't happen in Halifax. Staff recommended doing so could make the city liable for injuries as

well as open it up to discrimination lawsuits from poverty activists.

But Preston-Lawrence-town-Chezzetcook Coun. David Hendsbee said the charities are unofficially allowed to collect money on the street because the city turn's a blind eye. He said formalizing the process with a bylaw would have raised the legal issues.

Wage hike does little: Worker

KIM HART MACNEILL
for Metro Halifax

ECONOMY The minimum wage in Nova Scotia will increase to \$8.60 from \$8.10 on April 1, but that doesn't mean much to Sara Barter.

Barter works 30 hours per week as a cashier at a Needs store in Halifax. She earns \$8.50 per hour, and the raise to bring her up to the new minimum wage will only be about \$3 more per week.

"At 25 hours (per week), I can manage to live," she says, adding but not much else.

Nova Scotia's minimum wage is set by a review committee made up of two employees and two employers.

They consult the consumer price index, the low-income cutoff line, and a profile of minimum-wage employees.

The committee estimates 22 per cent of the workforce could benefit from the increase, as low entry-level wages often increase with minimum wage.

The committee recommends two more minimum-wage increases for next year, bringing it to \$9.65 on Oct. 1, 2010.

This would put Nova Scotia near the low-income cutoff line, which is based on family income and population size. For a single person living in a city the size of Halifax, it is \$8.97 per hour, assuming a 40-hour workweek all year, based on 2007 statistics.



Sara Barter, who works 30 hours a week at a convenience store, says the increase in minimum wage will result in an extra \$3 a week.

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Immigration Minister Jason Kenney yesterday denied a Globe and Mail report that Canada was close to accepting three Muslims from China's Uighur minority who are imprisoned at Guantanamo Bay. The men have been cleared of all charges, but remain in custody because no country is yet willing to take them in. **REUTERS**

Canada



Wood stoves on chopping block

In an effort to fight air pollution, Montreal city council is considering a bylaw that would prohibit wood-burning appliances — whether wood stoves or fireplaces — in all new residences or as replacements in existing homes. If approved, the bylaw will come into force by spring. The bylaw won't apply to commercial establishments, saving Montreal's famous wood-fired bagel.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

New food rules unsafe, vets say

CFIA faces lawsuit over regulations

Poultry destined for dinner tables will pose a greater public health risk under new inspection protocols that allow slaughterhouses to inspect themselves, says a legal action filed by federal veterinarians against the Canadian Food Inspection Agency.

Under proposed changes to the country's inspection system, slaughterhouse workers will be responsible for monitoring duties now carried out by veterinarians.

A notice of application filed in Federal Court in Ottawa by the Professional Institute of the Public Service against the CFIA says it is "contrary to the public in-

terest" to replace qualified independent veterinarians with unqualified people who are "not subject to public scrutiny."

"For slaughterhouse operators to watch for red spots or anything of the kind (on poultry carcasses) could have more serious ramifications," said Michèle Demers, president of the union representing veterinarians.

"It could have all kinds of things that a slaughterhouse operator doesn't have the expertise to make a judgement on."

Neither CFIA officials nor federal Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz would comment.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Ottawa Day of Mourning



Young protesters were among 800 people from across the country who attended the Day of Mourning yesterday at Parliament Hill in Ottawa to stop violence in Sri Lanka.

No fire sale planned: Flaherty

ECONOMY Canada will not sell off government assets at "fire sale" prices to raise funds, even as the country prepares to run deficits for the first time in more than a decade, the finance minister said yesterday.

"There will be no fire sales. You can be assured of that. There may be some sales. There may not," Finance Minister Jim Flaherty told reporters.

In its budget last month

the government said it was reviewing its assets to see if they are still needed or could be sold, and previous to that Flaherty had mentioned Toronto's landmark CN Tower as a possibility.

In the first year, the budget said, the asset review will focus on the departments of finance, Indian and northern affairs, natural resources and transport and infrastructure.

REUTERS

News in brief

TASER Sussex, N.B., RCMP used a Taser to subdue a New Brunswick woman who was allegedly wielding a knife while chasing her husband into a barber shop, CBC News Online reports. Stephanie Doucette, 30, appeared in court yesterday and faces several charges, including assault with a weapon and uttering death threats.

FEES Airline passengers could face higher costs after a cut in government funding intended to help airports meet tougher, post-9-11 security standards, Torstar News Service has learned. The plan to phase out a subsidy over the next three years was announced in last week's federal budget.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



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Man who censored the Beatles from Cuban airwaves is dead

The man who banned the Beatles from Cuba's radio and television stations in the 1970s has died, state television said on Tuesday. **REUTERS**

5

World

'Buy U.S.' plan revised

The U.S. Senate voted yesterday to soften a "Buy American" plan in its \$900 billion stimulus bill after president Barack Obama expressed concern the original language could trigger a trade war.

Senators approved an amendment requiring that provisions that upset Canada, the European Union and other trade partners be "applied in a manner consistent with U.S. obliga-

tions under international agreements."

The bill had required that projects funded by the stimulus package use only U.S.-made iron, steel and manufactured goods — potentially putting the U.S. in violation of its duties under NAFTA.

"I think it would be a mistake ... at a time when worldwide trade is declining, for us to start sending a message that somehow

Repercussions

• John Bruton, the EU ambassador to the U.S., told Reuters previously that approval of the original plan could lead to protectionist measures worldwide.

we're just looking after ourselves and not concerned with world trade," Obama said. **REUTERS**

India Slums offscreen



ARND BRONKHORST/REUTERS

Slum children, some of whom played minor roles in the Oscar-nominated film *Slumdog Millionaire*, pose yesterday at Nehru Nagar slums in Mumbai, where part of the film was shot. The movie's success has recently been overshadowed by protest in India over its name and portrayal of the lives of poor Indians.

Russia tackled at UN review over media killings, racism

COUNCIL Russia must do more to stop violence against minorities, torture by police, murders of journalists and, recently, the killing of a human rights lawyer, delegates to a UN rights body said yesterday.

"We are concerned at the trend of racism and xenophobia, which is resulting in a continuing rise in racial attacks," a delegate from South Africa said during a meeting of the

United Nations Human Rights Council.

Other issues raised at the first Russian council review process included political abductions, Internet child pornography and limits on independent civil society bodies.

All UN members must undergo a review every four years, though the process has been criticized by rights groups for being superficial. **REUTERS**

At least 52 killed in north Sri Lanka

ATTACKS At least 52 civilians were killed by shelling in Sri Lanka's northern war zone, while a crowded hospital was hit again and Britain and the U.S. urged a ceasefire.

A UN spokesman said 52 were killed and 80 wounded in the area of Suthanthirapuramin.

The Red Cross said the only hospital in the area has been evacuated after it was hit for a fifth time in three days. At least 12 people have been killed.

Sri Lanka's military has encircled the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam and is confident it will soon win the war, in which 70,000 people have been killed since 1983. **REUTERS**

News in brief

COLOMBIA An international team of scientists yesterday announced the discovery of fossil remains of the largest snake ever discovered. Titanoboa cer-

rejonensis was at least 43 feet long, weighed 2,500 pounds and its body was at least three feet wide, they wrote in the journal *Nature*. **REUTERS**



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Comment & Views

Comment

Politics of fear and smear

Home&Abroad

Andrew
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Canada & world insight

If you were wondering about the decline of our politics — or, more precisely, why so few Canadians voted in the last general election — consider the story of Bill Casey, the long-serving, independent-minded member of Parliament from Nova Scotia.

Mr. Casey was elected from the riding of Cumberland-Colchester-Musquodoboit Valley in 1988. He lost his seat in 1993 but was returned in 1997. Until 2007, he was a Conservative, and, by all accounts, loyal, principled and conscientious.

He was drummed out of the party when he voted against the government's budget because he said it vi-

olated the Atlantic Accord. In the last election, the Conservatives chose another candidate and Mr. Casey ran as an Independent.

Fair enough. Parties drop members who refuse to vote the party line (though, notably, Michael Ignatieff permitted a clutch of his fellow Liberals from Newfoundland to cast a symbolic vote against the federal budget this week). Stephen Harper thought Mr. Casey disloyal, and expelled him from the caucus. Leaders do that.

So Mr. Casey ran on his own. During the campaign, the local branch of the RCMP received a complaint that he had "embezzled" funds. He had not; the \$30,000 in question, transferred to an account established for his campaign, had been returned to the party.

Curiously, the complaint came from the Conservatives, specifically, says Canwest News Service, from Diana Read-Miedema. She



Independent MP Bill Casey alleges he is a victim of a smear campaign by the federal Conservative party.

was the official agent of Joel Bernard, the Conservative candidate.

Mr. Casey says it was "an attempt to smear my reputation and my character." That's why he rose in the House of Commons the other day to clear his name.

He is so angry that he promises to run again (he was re-elected with 68 per cent of the vote last year) although he had planned to retire. He thinks vindictive

Conservatives at a higher level were trying to discredit him.

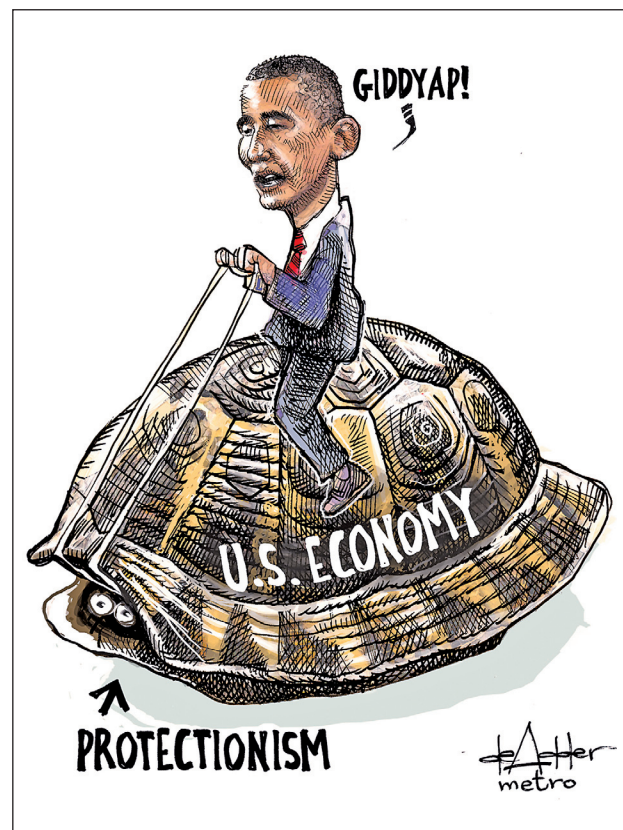
They say they weren't. The national party never had any questions involving Mr. Casey's transactions, says spokesman Ryan Sparrow.

Incidentally, would that be the same Ryan Sparrow who was "suspended" by the Conservatives during the campaign for saying the father of a dead soldier who had criticized Mr. Harper on Afghanistan was a Liberal?

And would that not be the same campaign in which the Conservatives gleefully vilified Stéphane Dion — a decent man — in cartoons, mocked his English and ridiculed his proposed carbon tax?

See a pattern here? This is politics of fear and smear. No wonder Canadians aren't voting any more.

Andrew Cohen teaches journalism at Carleton University. He is the author of *Extraordinary Canadians: Lester B. Pearson*.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Letters

No absolute answers

Atheists are allowed to express their religious views too. Agnostics, too.

If God is the highest most knowing being in the universe, and one knows there is no God, one may then be the most knowing being and is in fact God. I would say,

there is a God, don't worry — he's got the whole world in his hands ... or our atheists do.

As a conservative Calvinist Christian, I understand there are no easy answers, and a qualified absolute statement on God is hardly a basis for living by happenstance.

JOHN VAN EGMOND, MISSISSAUGA

Worth mentioning

First lady fashion's saviour?

With a penchant for off-the-rack American brands like Gap and J Crew, Michelle Obama could be a shot in the arm to a U.S. apparel industry desperate for excitement — and sales.

Fashion choices made by America's new first lady, who likes a mix of designer pieces and more affordable brands, can translate directly into dollars for apparel retailers facing a slump in demand as Americans cut back on clothing purchases.

"This is a living, breathing example of a first lady having a massive influence," said Mandi Norwood, a former Mademoiselle

editor writing a book on Obama's style.

Industry watchers say Obama, 45, a former lawyer and mother of two girls, speaks to today's shopper who is practical, frugal and pressed for time — but still wants to look good. Apparel stores catering to women over 40 have felt the worst of the inertia pervading the industry.

Chains have struggled to provide that audience with looks that are sophisticated, feminine yet a bit playful, have now been handed a marketing tool, experts said. REUTERS

GETTY IMAGES

Views

Atheist ads promote debate, understanding



Robert C.
Fennell

Recently, it was announced that some atheists and the Freethought Foundation of Canada are planning to buy advertising space on Canadian transit systems in order to broadcast the message that "There's probably no God." Several cities' transit systems, such as Halifax and Victoria, have already rejected the campaign.

Should this campaign be allowed? I can't see how they can be denied the right to advertise. Such beliefs are clearly already part of the cultural landscape in which we live — a landscape in which free speech and freedom of religion are highly prized. So long as these ads do not incite hatred, no en-

during harm will result. Of course, just as people have the freedom to run these ads, anyone reading them has the freedom to disagree completely.

Christian objections to these transit ads, or the objections of any other religious tradition, run the risk of painting themselves into a corner. If I enjoy the freedom to celebrate publicly the existence of God — which I do — then non-religious beliefs should be permitted in the public arena as well. If I forbid others to share their faith, or lack of it, I must be prepared to have the public expression of my faith forbidden. Such silencing on either side does nothing to advance understanding, compassion and reconciliation.

It was, in fact, Christian messages about Jesus on buses in England that first

"Silencing on either side does nothing to advance understanding."

prompted this campaign. In London and elsewhere, atheist-inspired bus advertising suggested "There's probably no God." Ironically, the credibility and durability of Christian faith — or any faith — are actually strengthened when such "atheist ads" invite public response. All religious belief is more convincing when we are willing to enter into debate and dialogue, rather than running away or shutting it down. This is certainly a moment in history when we need plenty of dialogue to find deeper mutual understanding and respect. By knowing and trusting one another, let's hope we

can more effectively tackle the real crises of hunger, disease, war and poverty.

If atheist advertising appears in Canada, Christians and other religious groups need not overreact. People of faith have nothing to fear. The faith that Christians, Muslims, Jews, Hindus and others have does not depend on everyone agreeing with them. After all, Canada has matured in the last decade. We have welcomed back into public life and conversation many dimensions of faith and spirituality. Our many faith (and non-faith) traditions reveal exciting searches for meaning, transcendence and ethical living. They are all part of what makes Canadian culture interesting, vibrant, creative — and free.

Robert C. Fennell is a professor of Christian theology and history in Halifax.

It's your turn to tell others what you think. E-mail your thoughts and opinions to: halifaxletters@metronews.ca

Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number — street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

OPEC may cut output again

OPEC members could discuss a cut of around one million barrels per day (bpd) at their March 15 meeting in Vienna, sources inside the organization say. Such a move would be the fourth reduction since September, to total 5.2 million bpd in cuts. **REUTERS**

7

Business

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

January job losses pegged at 40,000

The carnage in Canada's labour market persisted in January as the recession forced layoffs across a wide array of industries, analysts say, predicting the worst multi-month string of job losses since the early 1990s.

Employers are expected to have cut 40,000 jobs in January in the third straight month of employment decline, according to the median forecast of analysts surveyed by Reuters.

They predicted the unemployment rate would jump to 6.8 per cent from 6.6 per cent in December, its highest level since June 2005.

Fewer hirings

• Businesses surveyed by the Bank of Canada in the fourth quarter said they thought hiring would decrease over the next 12 months.

If the forecasts are right, the economy will have shed 124,000 jobs from November to January — a magnitude of back-to-back job losses not seen since late 1991 and early 1992, according to Statistics Canada data.

Jobs were relatively safe

in Canada through most of 2008, when the net gain in employment was about 80,000, much rosier than in the United States, where employers slashed 2.6 million jobs.

But more recent anecdotal evidence shows the slowdown is setting in: stories of companies idling plants and cutting staff have since become daily fare in Canada, compounded by plunging confidence levels due to bad news coming from the U.S.

And the weakness now extends beyond manufacturing and forestry sectors to services as well. **REUTERS**

The DAILY BUSINESS BUZZ

Sydney air service starts:

Air Canada announced yesterday that starting May 1, it will launch daily seasonal non-stop service between Sydney and Toronto. A flight from Toronto will arrive in Sydney at 23:59, and a Toronto-bound flight will leave Sydney at 07:00.

Beef industry ailing:

The beef cattle industry has stampeded into crisis and urgent government action or cash infusion is needed to steer it in a better direction. Bill Scott, president of the Zone 3 Cattle Producer's Association, said years of turmoil in their industry has rendered farmers incapable of recuperating costs and many are on the verge of foreclosure.

Work conflict common:

Government, school and not-for-profit workplaces are the most conflict-ridden work environments, a new Psychometrics Canada survey found. Two-thirds of respondents witnessed personal insults, which led to more absences. Four of five said conflict led to someone leaving the workplace.

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DAILY BUSINESS BUZZ
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Barbie Hitting her golden years



A young woman poses with a Barbie doll during the media preview of the 60th International Toy Fair in Nuremberg, Germany, yesterday. The world's most popular doll is turning 50 this year. More than 2,700 exhibitors from more than 60 countries will present their new toy products from Feb. 5 to Feb. 10.

Resolution to RIM stock option scandal on horizon

LEGAL Shares of BlackBerry-maker Research In Motion rose yesterday, ahead of a regulatory hearing that could see a settlement with the company's co-CEOs Jim Balsillie and Mike Lazaridis over their role in a controversy over the backdating of stock options.

The hearing between RIM, the CEOs and the Ontario Securities Commission to approve a deal is slated for today.

RIM shares rose 1.6 per cent to \$69.36 on the Toronto Stock Exchange.

Analysts view RIM's in-

Tough penalties

• The fines to be levied against RIM's co-CEOs is not known, but the Globe and Mail reported the Ontario Securities Commission had been seeking a penalty as high as \$100 million.

ternal review of options grants, and a subsequent \$250-million earnings restatement related to errors in how options were granted, as disruptive but ultimately immaterial. **REUTERS**

Business in brief

RETAIL Hudson's Bay Co. said it will cut 1,000 jobs, or five per cent of its full-time workforce, to cope with the worsening economy — mainly head office jobs in accounting, information technology and logistics. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

ONLINE Google released software called Google Latitude that allows users of wireless phones and devices to automatically share their whereabouts with friends and family. Latitude is available on some phones in Canada. **REUTERS**

AIRLINE WestJet Airlines is poised to extend its overseas reach after it signed a pact with Air France-KLM to form a code-share agreement, which allows WestJet to sell tickets for flights on other airlines as its own. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**



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Sports



Evidence against Bonds unsealed

A U.S. federal judge yesterday unsealed hundreds of pages of court documents at the heart of the criminal case against Barry Bonds, left, including positive drug tests that prosecutors linked to the home-run king. They include a transcript of conversations regarding injecting the slugger, and a list of players, such as Jason Giambi, who are scheduled to testify for the U.S. government at Bonds' upcoming trial. METRO NEWS SERVICES

SPORTS@METRONEWS.CA

Bosh hurt, Raptors come up short

NBA RESULT

Lakers 115 Raptors 107



Kobe Bryant finished with 36 points, and had a crucial basket and rebound in the final minute to lead the Los Angeles Lakers to a 115-107 win over the Toronto Raptors last night.

Joey Graham scored a career-high 24 points for the Raptors, while Jermaine O'Neal nearly ended up with a triple-double, posting 22 points, nine rebounds and a season-high nine blocks.

Andrea Bargnani had 21 points and nine boards for Toronto, which not only dropped its fourth consecu-

tive game, but lost forward Chris Bosh to a sprained right knee in the fourth quarter.

He had 12 points through nearly 29 minutes of action, but did not return after leaving the game. He went to a local hospital following the game for precautionary X-rays.

Toronto was already playing without guard Jose Calderon, who sat with a sore hamstring.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

LeBron 52 in NY

- Two nights after Kobe Bryant scored 61 points at Madison Square Garden, LeBron James dropped 52 last night in a 107-102 Cavs win over the Knicks.



Kobe Bryant passes over Joey Graham and Chris Bosh last night in Toronto.

Sports in brief

SOCCER David Beckham said for the first time yesterday that he would like to quit the L.A. Galaxy of the MLS and make a permanent move to AC Milan. The former Manchester United and Real Madrid midfielder added that he might want to end his career at Milan and that playing there would enhance his chances of another World Cup with England in South Africa next year. "I have expressed my desire now to stay in Milan and hopefully the clubs can come to some agreement," Beckham, who is on loan with the Italian giants, told reporters. REUTERS



Bruins continue their hot streak in Philly

NHL ROUNDUP

Bruins 3, Flyers 1

David Krejci netted the game-winning goal in the third period as Boston slipped by Philadelphia, 3-1 last night.

Michael Ryder and Dennis Wideman also tallied for the Bruins, who have won three in a row and eight of their last 11 overall. Boston has also reeled off 10 wins in its last 11 games on the road. Tim Thomas made 25 saves for the Eastern Conference-leading Bruins, who improved to 38-8-6 on the season for 82 points, five ahead



Bruins goalie Tim Thomas takes the puck from Flyers centre Glen Metropolit last night in Philadelphia.

of San Jose for the best record in the NHL.

Scott Hartnell provided the only goal for the flu-ridden Flyers, who missed Mike Richards and Scottie Upshall along with defenceman Braydon Coburn.

SABRES 5, MAPLE LEAFS 0

Thomas Vanek recorded his first hat trick of the season as Buffalo routed Toronto, 5-0, at HSBC Arena.

Ryan Miller needed to make just 16 saves to record his second consecutive shutout, stretching his scoreless string to 126 minutes, 52 seconds after a goal late in the third period of a 5-2 loss at Calgary on Jan. 28.

In his third NHL start, Justin Pogge surrendered five goals on 32 shots for the Maple Leafs, who have dropped two in a row and six of eight and were held scoreless for the fourth time this season.

RED WINGS 5, COYOTES 4

Nicklas Lidstrom's power-play goal with 39 seconds remaining in the third period lifted the Detroit Red Wings to a 5-4 win over the Phoenix Coyotes. Marian Hossa recorded his second straight multi-goal game for the Red Wings, who have won two in a row after going winless in five. Henrik Zetterberg returned from a three-game absence with back spasms and also scored for Detroit.

Elsewhere in the NHL, it was Pittsburgh 4, Tampa Bay 3 (OT) and Minnesota 3, Anaheim 0.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

It boils down to Murray's mess in the nation's capital

Tuesday will long be remembered by **Cory Clouston** as one of the greatest of his life. Savour it, Mr. Clouston, because you may very well remember it as the day the Ottawa Senators set you up for failure.

Clouston is the new coach of the Senators and already he's seeing how things run in Ottawa.

We're going to just put this out there, but we figure losing 1-0 to a rebuilding non-playoff team probably isn't the most inspired effort the Senators

TheHockeyNews



Ken Campbell

thehockeynews.com

could have put forth for their new bench boss.

The Senators could have hired **Scotty Bowman** or **Pat Quinn** — and they likely would have if not for the fact that they're already paying two people not to coach for them — and not

even they would have been able to pull them out of this train wreck.

So how exactly is a 39-year-old with just 1½ years of pro coaching experience and not a game — sorry, one game now — in the NHL supposed to do it?

To make matters even more drastic, Clouston is surrounded by assistant coaches who are basically in the same boat he is.

Greg Carvel has been an assistant for a few years and **Luke Richardson** still has to look at the score-sheet to see if he's in the lineup.

Contrast that to last summer when **Craig Hartsburg** — remember him? — wanted to hire longtime NHL assistant **Wayne Fleming**, but the Senators refused to pay Fleming what he thought he was worth and he went to coach in Russia.

The point is, Cory Clouston might be a terrific young coach, but he has been put in a no-win situation with a team that has been largely run into the ground.

This is a team that has been circling the drain for the better part of 14

months now and there's almost no chance Clouston, at this time with this team, is going to be able to stop that tide.

A wiser move by owner **Eugene Melnyk** would have been to reinstall **Bryan Murray** for his third tour of duty behind the Senators bench.

At least then Murray would have been able to see up close the mess the Senators have become under his watch.

The Hockey News

thn.com

SCOREBOARD

QMJHL

	ATLANTIC DIVISION			
	W	L	OT	P
x-Moncton	37	9	5	79
x-Cape Breton	37	15	2	76
Saint John	27	23	4	58
P.E.I.	19	25	9	47
Bathurst	18	24	10	46
HALIFAX	14	32	5	33
	WEST DIVISION			
	W	L	OT	P
Gatineau	29	21	4	62
Rouyn-Noranda	24	22	7	55
Montreal	25	22	3	53
Val-d'Or	14	31	7	35
	CENTRAL DIVISION			
	W	L	OT	P
x-Drummondville	40	9	3	83
x-Shawinigan	40	11	2	82
Victoriaville	27	25	1	55
Lewiston	18	34	1	37
	EAST DIVISION			
	W	L	OT	P
x-Quebec	39	10	3	81
Rimouski	29	22	1	59
Chicoutimi	17	23	10	44
Baie-Comeau	16	28	7	39

x-Clinched playoff spot

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Cape Breton 5 Chicoutimi 4

Val-d'Or 4 Lewiston 1

FRIDAY

Rouyn-Noranda at HALIFAX, 7

SATURDAY

Rimouski at HALIFAX, 7

PBL

	ATLANTIC CONFERENCE		
	W	L	PCT
Vermont	6	3	.667
Manchester	6	3	.667
HALIFAX	6	5	.545
Montreal	3	5	.375
Quebec	2	5	.286

SUNDAY

Vermont at HALIFAX, 4

X-Men assistant resigns after confrontation

St. Francis Xavier X-Men basketball assistant coach Garry Gallimore resigned yesterday after a physical confrontation with a minor official in a Jan. 28 loss to the Cape Breton Capers in Sydney. Gallimore apologized to the official and both schools. **METRO HALIFAX**



Crookshank back in action

MATTHEW WUEST

matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

The Halifax Rainmen threw Eric Crookshank's season-long suspension out the window yesterday.

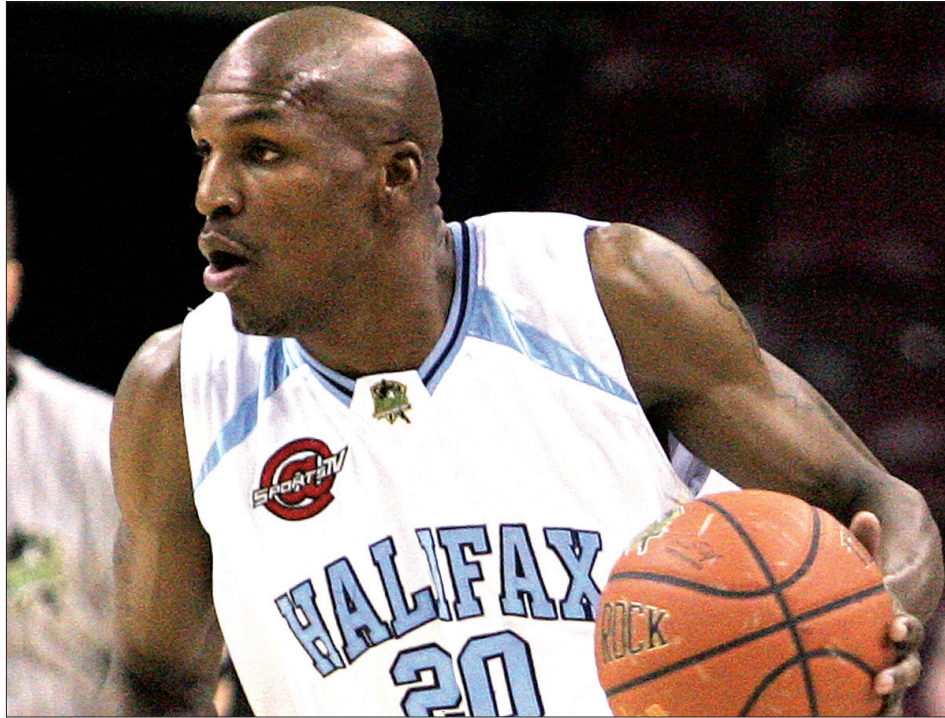
The star forward was welcomed back to the Premier Basketball League team with open arms after serving less than half of a suspension that owner Andre Levingston once said would not be lifted under any circumstances.

Crookshank was banned with pay on Jan. 14 for "conduct detrimental to the team," three days after publicly questioning head coach Rick Lewis for benching him.

Lewis, coincidentally, was fired on Tuesday.

Levingston said Lewis' dismissal had "absolutely nothing" to do with the reinstatement. Rather, he said, Crookshank has "learned his lesson," and that was the point all along.

"He knows now he's going to be held accountable



The Halifax Rainmen have lifted the suspension of star forward Eric Crookshank. Crookshank was given season-long suspension on Jan. 14 after questioning his coach.

for his actions," Levingston said. "He's gonna think twice before he does something he feels he can get away with just because he's an (athlete). He knows

he has to conduct himself as a professional at all times and there are no excuses."

The six-foot-eight Crookshank will throw on his fa-

miliar No. 20 on Sunday at 4 p.m. at the Metro Centre when the Rainmen (6-5) host the Vermont Frost Heaves (6-3). It's a game pivotal to their quest for

the Premier Basketball League playoffs.

Crookshank, who spent his seven games off the court speaking to youth about accountability, said he "never stopped smiling," but admitted it was a tough three weeks.

"Playing basketball is the only thing that calms me down and makes me happy in life, besides my family," he said. "I've learned there are consequences, and I'm hungry and determined and I think it's a good time to bring me back."

Crookshank, who has averaged more than 20 points and 10 rebounds in Halifax, is calling Sunday the "album-release party" for him and fellow star Rob Sanders — self-dubbed "Double Trouble" — and hopes for a big crowd.

"I would love for everybody that supported the Rainmen and myself to come out and have a big day for Halifax," Crookshank said. "It's a big game, and it's a new beginning."

Rainmen to name new coach today

ANNOUNCEMENT The Halifax Rainmen will announce their new head coach at a press conference this afternoon at 2:30 p.m.

The Rainmen, who fired Rick Lewis on Tuesday, are looking for a coach who will implement more movement on offence, greater tenacity on defence, smarter in-game adjustments, and better mental preparedness.

Lewis guided the Rainmen to a 12-20 record in the American Basketball Association and had them off to a 6-5 start in the Premier Basketball League this year.

Owner Andre Levingston didn't tip his hand on his choice, but joked, "I tried to get (Los Angeles Lakers head coach) Phil Jackson but they have an opportunity for a championship and he couldn't leave, so I had to get the next best coach."

METRO HALIFAX

Hockey clash Huskies down X-Men



Saint Mary's Huskies forward Chris Morehouse takes a shot on St. Francis Xavier X-Men goalie Ryan Aschaber in Atlantic University Sport men's hockey action at the Alumni Arena. The second-place Huskies (18-8) won 7-4. In other AUS action, the Dalhousie Tigers (4-19-1) lost their ninth straight game, 8-4 to the Acadia Axemen at Memorial Arena.



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Metro Homes

EDITOR: DOUGLAS DUNLOP, DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Flooring: is all in the grout

HomeScape

**Sylvia
Putz**

metronews.ca/homescape

If you love to cook, entertain a lot or have children, your kitchen floor will be well-used and abused. And the wrong type of flooring will cause you headaches, believe me.

I don't know what I was thinking when I purchased light-coloured tiles with ivory grout for my kitchen. Perhaps I had imagined that a tiled kitchen was my ticket to a maintenance-free kitchen floor. Or maybe that the whole kitchen could be self-cleaning, like those European public toilet booths that close up tight and self-scrub after every usage. But no, this was unfortunately not the case.

My excuse is that I was seduced by gorgeous pictures in a magazine. The reality is that I now fully appreciate that a light tile shows dirt much more readily than a dark one. Furthermore, I unwisely did not go along with my mother's advice that I should buy a tile with a splotchy pattern, so dirt would not be so obvious. I went with a subtle linear pattern that showcases dirt as if it were on Broadway. What was I thinking?

Making a decision about kitchen flooring is not easy. But if your kitchen is an active area, you need to think carefully about cleaning requirements and whether you are content with more or much happier with less. There are many choices in kitchen flooring and all require some maintenance, but the bottom

Thinking wood?

- Some say wood with polyurethane is great for kitchens because it is easier on the back than standing on hard tile. But water damage poses a problem for wood that is not sealed well, so you must make sure your wooden flooring is well sealed, preferably on site so both the wood and the hairline spaces between the boards are sealed.

line is that some are much more fussy than others.

First of all, don't choose white tile or grout, unless you enjoy cleaning your floors after every meal. Also be wary of lighter colours or subtle patterns that show every spill or drip.

And know that some materials cause more stress than others. For example, natural stone, such as marble, limestone or granite is beautiful, but these stones are porous, so spilling balsamic vinegar or barbecue sauce may pose a stain hazard if the stone is not sealed regularly or the spill is not immediately wiped off.

Concrete is durable and very flexible as it can be made to look like slate, tile, brick or cobblestone. It can be stamped, stenciled and etched with acid, or it can be left smooth. But it too must be sealed regularly because untreated or infrequently treated concrete soaks up spills and stains.

That leaves us with porcelain, ceramic or vinyl, the traditional choices for a kitchen. But each of these has its ups and downs. The seams between vinyl peel and stick tiles collect dirt fast, plus edges will eventually chip and peel back. Rolled vinyl is a better choice,

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Picking your kitchen flooring can be a tough decision as there are many options to choose from such as whether to go with concrete, stone, ceramic, vinyl or wood.

but remember that vinyl is easily damaged.

Ceramic tiles and porcelain are much tougher, and they stand up to water without the necessity of sealing in most cases. Sounds like the best choice for minimizing work, but the dirty grout problem is a headache. It helps to seal the grout when it is new or freshly cleaned. Thin lines of grout also help make

dirty grout less obvious, as does a darker grout colour.

Remember that you'll probably be scrubbing at the grout with a toothbrush at some point, but you'll undoubtedly want to make sure it's required less often rather than more.

Sylvia Putz is a journalist with an interest in decor and design. She's written for the TV show *Arresting Design*; sputz@arrestingdesign.com.

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PLAN

"Think Big" right from the start and make a plan that includes the whole house even if you don't intend to do it all at this point.

Dig out your old house plans or make a simple sketch of your floor plan. Take some pictures throughout your home with an eye to focal points that you don't plan to change.

Having an all inclusive plan in place helps you to see the whole picture and also ensures that all rooms and colours will coordinate and flow when the house is completed.

CLEAR YOUR MIND

Clear your mind of all the preconceived ideas of what you think the colours should be, be an open book and explore all the new approaches that are sent your way.

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KitchenAid is reuniting with BakeSpace.com in February for the appliance maker's second online Appliance-a-Day Giveaway. This means that every day next month, foodies who visit the food social network can win premium appliances. Visit bakespace.com/kitchenaid. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Food

"To roast garlic with the vegetables, separate cloves (as many as you like) but do not peel. Toss with vegetables to roast."

Barb Holland/for Metro Canada



Compost

When done, squeeze garlic out of skins, discarding skins in the compost.

EDITOR: NINA DRAGICEVIC, NINA.DRAGICEVIC@METRONEWS.CA

try this out



Try adding vanilla to hot chocolate or add a sprinkle of vanilla powder to your dessert recipes.

Vanilla sets mood for Valentine's

AROMA Research demonstrates the area of the brain that affects emotions is directly connected to the sense of smell. For most of us, the heady, aromatic scent of pure vanilla stirs up memories of warm and cozy places and could be the perfect way to set a romantic mood this Valentine's Day.

Studies have also shown the scent of vanilla has a calming effect and helps reduce stress and anxiety. Because of its pleasing nature, vanilla is an increasingly popular ingredient in many perfumes and fragrances.

These tips come from Nielsen-Massey Vanillas, purveyors of pure vanillas and fine flavours:

- A few drops of pure vanilla extract on a hot light bulb will help scent the room
 - A drop or two behind the ears as the perfect perfume
 - A cotton ball soaked in vanilla helps deodorize the refrigerator or freezer
 - A vanilla bean under a chair or sofa cushion will give a pleasant, fresh aroma
 - A few drops of vanilla in a can of paint will help eliminate odors
- Or consider the following dessert ideas to top off a vanilla-inspired romantic evening:**
- Add a quarter teaspoon of vanilla to hot chocolate for a warm treat
 - Sprinkle vanilla powder on brownies or chocolate cake.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



You can roast potatoes, carrots, parsnips, brussels sprouts, sweet potatoes, rutabaga, fennel, beets, celeriac and onions.

Vegetables that can boast the best roast

À la carte

Barb Holland

Metro Food Writer

Roasting vegetables brings out their natural sweetness, maintains their bright colour and adds flavour you just don't get when you boil or steam them.

Use a large, shallow, preferably dark coloured roasting pan. Spread vegetables in a single layer, as overcrowding will steam rather than roast vegetables. If making a large amount, use two pans and rotate the pans partway through cooking. Stir occasionally.

The oven temperature can vary with whatever you might be cooking at the same time (a roast), from 325°F to 400°F (160°C

to 200°C), just adjust cooking time accordingly.

Many vegetables can be roasted at the same time, however denser vegetables will take longer than softer vegetables and the size of the pieces will also affect cooking time. Don't cut vegetables too small or they might burn rather than roast.

Roasted Root Vegetables

Vary the vegetables and amounts to your preferences. I like to give the potatoes a bit of a head start in the oven rather than parboiling them. Makes about 6 to 8 servings.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 – 2 tbsp (15 to 30 ml) olive oil
- 2 to 3 medium all-purpose or Yukon Gold potatoes
- 2 tbsp (30 ml) olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, halved
- 1/2 tsp (2 ml) dried thyme leaves

Many vegetables can be roasted at the same time, however denser vegetables will take longer than softer vegetables and the size of the pieces will also affect cooking time.

- 1/4 tsp (1 ml) crushed dried rosemary leaves
- Pinch each coarse salt and pepper
- 2 to 3 carrots
- 2 to 3 parsnips
- 1 small butternut squash

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 325°F to 375°F (160°C to 190°C). Peel potatoes and cut into wedges or chunks. Toss potatoes with 1 tbsp (15 ml) oil, garlic, thyme, rosemary, salt and pepper. Place in a large, shallow heavy roasting pan. Roast

10 minutes.

Peel and cut remaining vegetables in 2-inch (5 cm) chunks. Toss carrots, parsnips and squash with remaining 1 tbsp (15 ml) oil and add to pan after potatoes have been cooking 10 minutes. Stir and roast until vegetables are tender and nicely browned, 45 to 60 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Other Vegetables: For something a little different, try roasting cauliflower. Cut cauliflower into florets, toss with olive oil and seasonings (as above) and roast until lightly browned and tender. Other winter vegetables that roast well are Brussels sprouts, sweet potatoes, rutabaga, fennel, beets, celeriac and onions.

Serve roasted vegetables as a side dish, or toss with cooked pasta.

Barb Holland is a professional home economist and food writer who believes in shopping locally and in season.

Liquid Assets

Peter Rockwell

liquidassets@eastlink.ca

Pizza picks

If you've ever been to Italy you know the way we treat pizza in Canada is a crime. Over there the combination of dough, tomatoes, mozzarella and toppings is an art form. Here, with some notable exceptions, our attempt at a good pie is a bore that takes an hour to deliver.

It drives me crazy because I love pizza (especially my wife's homemade creations) and there is nothing I enjoy more than a few slices washed down with a glass or two of vino.

The best pick is a red with low acidity because the tomato sauce will bring more than enough to the party. Wines made from the Sangiovese grape (like those from Italy's Chianti region) are a classic match.

The **2007 Trapiche Malbec** (\$8.65 - \$10.90) from Argentina is a nice alternative especially if you are looking to drink on the cheap. Though enjoyable now, its blueberry fruit and youthful tannins could still use some time in the bottle to mellow.

I'm partial to Spanish Rioja with my pie and the soft, wild cherry fruit with a touch of wood spice that is the **2006 Campo Viejo Crianza** (\$14.45 - \$17.50) will have you reaching for another piece.

Prices reflect the range across the country. Some products may not be available in all provinces.



Peter Rockwell is the everyman's wine writer, working in the liquor industry for more than 25 years and travelling the globe looking for something to fill his glass and put into words.

Andy The-Anh guest judge

Critically acclaimed Vietnam-born, Canadian-raised designer Andy The-Anh will be appearing as a guest judge on Project Runway Canada on Tuesday Feb. 10. The-Anh is well known for his impeccable suits and his stunning dresses. **METRO NEWS SERVICE**

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Style



Glam up your mane

Whether you're going out to a romantic dinner or just staying in, bring a touch of elegance to your V-day 'do with Goody Luxe hair accessories. This collection is available in four styles, ranging from classic to modern: Deco, Antique, Vine and Starburst. The Goody Luxe collection, ranging in price from \$4.99 to \$7.99, is available in leading food, drug and mass-market retailers across Canada. **METRO NEWS SERVICE**

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE COLACINO, ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Plaid up top, neutrals below

Style File



ask kim

I have two things in mind that I want to give my girlfriend on Valentine's Day — a ring and a necklace, which one should I get her?

Go for the necklace, a ring seems a little too serious for a Valentine's Day present. The Tiffany Keys Collection at Tiffany & Co. is an elegantly designed collection that any girl would love to have. If you're looking for other classic designs check out the adorable antique seal inspired necklaces at pyrrha.com.

E-mail your style questions to kim.elbo@gmail.com.

Vancouver's Kim Elbo has a passion for fashion. Here she shares the latest style tips.



Red & Blue
Designer: H&M
Shop: H&M
Address: Various Locations
hm.com

Black
Designer: American Eagle
Shop: American Eagle
Address: Various Locations
ae.com

Rose
Designer: Gap
Shop: Gap
Address: Various Locations
gap.com

Slip On
Designer: John Varvatos
Shop: J2 clothing
Address: Various Locations
j2clothing.com

Moccasin
Designer: Fenchurch
Shop: Boardroom
boardroomshop.com

High Top
Designer: Aldo
Shop: Aldo
Address: Various Locations
aldoshoes.com

tip: Have mildew on your leather shoes? Mix together a cup of rubbing alcohol and an equal amount of water. Sponge on, working into the leather, and allow to air dry. (essortment.com).

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Plaid

Minimal on the check colours and very casual, spring's plaid shirts are a definite staple. Lightly distressed, faded and wrinkled are how these plaids are being bought and worn. If you're looking for a layering piece to go on top, style the plaid button up with a polished plain blazer, cardigan sweater or a waist coat. A simple dark jean will do with this plaid style; anything lighter may look a little too lumberjack.

accessory

Keep it smooth with Truefitt & Hill's natural shaving cream, \$33, and Merkur's perfectly balanced weight razor, \$55. Available at momentumgrooming.com.



Shoe Trend

Take a walk on the not-so-wild side with classic canvas shoes, leather moccasins and suede high tops. This spring, men's shoes are seen in neutral tones and as low profile slip-ons. It's all in the details with these natural hues so look for the extras like different coloured insoles and mixed fabrics. These shoes will look great with lighter linens, shorts, khakis and jeans.

Acid wash returns

TRENDS It's kind of funny to see how many trends have surfaced from the worst of the '80s bin. First, harem pants (YSL made them beautiful and luxe, but the world still associates them with MC Hammer), then Bananarama style jumpsuits (YouTube them) and now — wait for it — acid wash denim.

**KENYA HUNT/
METRO WORLD NEWS**

GlobalStyle

Kenya Hunt

Read Kenya, exclusively at metronews.ca/globalstyle and check out her blog at kenystyle.com

jaywellssalon

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Let's hear it for
4 Years!

Join us on Monday, February 9th

We're excited to be celebrating our fourth anniversary! Stop in for complimentary snacks and chair massages, plus, we'll be donating a portion of proceeds from each booked massage to the YMCA's Strong Kids campaign.

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Bioré®

Add some curve to your lashes

Curves aren't just for hips anymore, add some curvaceous beauty to your lashes with Rimmel's new Sexy Curves Mascara, \$7.99. Its curvy triple plump brush has shorter bristles to build volume and longer ones to curl and separate. **METRO NEWS SERVICE**



style **15**

High fashion stays true

Paris couture shows flaunt whimsy and excess

Let them eat cake. The famous French diss was on the tip of everyone's tongue at the Paris haute couture fashion shows last week.

The theme was set early with the frothy Dior confections that opened the week.

While economies around the world crumble, the small band of couture designers snubbed such cold realities and asked their audience to suspend disbelief—to dream.

Christian Lacroix's bride combined full tulle skirts with gleaming embroidered matador jacket. For Chanel, Karl Lagerfeld explored the

"There is a credit crunch, not a creative crunch...It's our job to make people dream."

John Galliano, designer

and clean modern minimalism all in white. Jean Paul Gaultier's Spanish collection riffed on the sultry flamenco dancer and Picasso's sculptural cubism.

Unlike ready-to-wear collections that are shown in fashion capitals six months ahead of their season, couture shows are mounted just weeks before the time the designs are meant to be worn.

The spring/summer shows, narrowed down to just three days this season, are composed of one-of-a-kind spectacles intended only for the extremely rich. Though the market for such confections may be dwindling, they continue to pitch glamour against the economic odds.

And despite a downturn in the global economy, chances are slim that these luxurious suits and dresses will ever be discounted.

Still, they attract an audience — burlesque star Dita

Von Teese, actress Mischa Barton and rapper Kanye West.

For Dior, British designer John Galliano referenced the early days of Christian Dior as well as paintings by 17th-century Dutch masters. Consider a magical mix of billowy puff sleeves, fitted torsos and magnificently giant loopy skirts.

It might seem insensitive to flaunt such excess. But it ain't called haute for nothing.

As an institution, haute couture is in palliative care. Yet it won't lie down.

And as sure as each passing season it becomes more of an anachronism, its defenders leap to justify its existence.

They wax on about its magical, fantastical nature — how important it is to experiment with the limits of fabric and cut and drape, how important it is to escape the realities of a sometimes hard-knock world.

"Something to make people dream," said Bernard Arnault, chair and chief executive of LVMH Group and Christian Dior, after Monday's show.

While he predicted things wouldn't get better until the end of 2010, many fashion watchers lament that haute couture has been on a long, steady march toward irrelevancy for decades.

John Galliano told reporters: "There is a credit crunch, not a creative crunch. Of course, everyone is being more careful with their discretionary purchases. I am. But it's our job to make people dream, and to provide the value in quality, cut and imagination."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Paris couture week highlights

KENYA HUNT
Metro World News



Jean Paul Gaultier

Whether through flashes of skin or razor sharp tailoring, Jean Paul Gaultier made the shoulders a focal point.



Anne Valérie Hash

Anne Valérie Hash brought a young and understated sense of coolness to couture week.



Givenchy

If the couturiers jobs were indeed to "make the summer collections relevant to a changed world," according to The International Herald Tribune's Suzy Menkes, then Givenchy's Riccardo Tisci got it right.



Designer Christian Siriano, the winner of Project Runway season four, is set to release a Payless collection this fall.

Accessorize with Siriano designs

JOSEPHINE LIM
for Metro Canada



The youngest Project Runway winner Christian Siriano is back, but this time he's trying his hand at designing shoes and purses instead of clothes.

Siriano, the winner of season four, has signed a deal with Payless Shoe-Source to design his first footwear and handbag collection. It will be unveiled at New York's fashion week this month and be available in stores across Canada this fall.

The deal covers multi-season collections, and price points are expected to be in the \$50 to \$70 range.

"I think it's great for me to partner with Payless because my clothes are a little higher end, but I realized I also have a younger fan base," says Siriano.

"I think all of them could shop at Payless and buy the shoes because they're designer and really similar to the originals we're designing for the runway."

He joins other Payless designers and stylists such as Laura Poretzky, Lela Rose, Stacey Bendet and Patricia Field. All their collections

aim to feature the latest runway and red carpet styles.

"I think people are really careful with what they're spending their money on fashion-wise," says Siriano.

That's not to say he isn't confident in selling his collection.

"I think accessories and shoes people will always buy even in a tough economy," says Siriano. "If you have a fabulous dress, you need fabulous shoes to go with it."

As for what to expect in his fall collection, it's a reflection of women he loves to dress — someone who is powerful and strong. The collection entails rich colours, Egypt and the desert, which is very different from his spring collection.

"I think inspiration comes from what I love inside. Then, I take it from something material like Egypt and the desert," says Siriano.

His collection uses a lot of snake-skin patented leather with chain elements, says Siriano. He says to expect really strong shoes and dramatic shapes for his bags.

"(The bags are) quite cool and not overly feminine," he says. "You can be any type of girl wearing them."



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Entertainment



Song dispute

Rihanna and Michael Jackson are being sued for allegedly stealing the song **Wanna Be Startin' Something**, female-first.co.uk reports. Singer Manu Dibango claims they stole part of his song **Soul Makossa**. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

●●●●● A CLASSIC; ●●●● EXCELLENT; ●●● GOOD; ●● FAIR; ● POOR

Jenn Grant finds her voice

The Derek Trucks Band

Album: Already Free

Label: Sony Music

Rating: ●●●●●

AS GUITARIST FOR THE Allman Brothers Band, Derek Trucks is the true successor to slide legend Duane Allman. Trucks is unquestionably one of the great electric blues-rock guitarists in the business today and the solos here are the sort that set the hairs on the back of your neck on end. On this disc, Trucks takes his solo band in a southern R&B direction more in keeping with the old Electric Flag than the Allmans.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

MusicReviews

music@metronews.ca

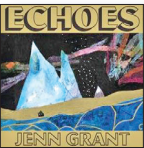
Jenn Grant

Album: Echoes

Label: Six Shooter/Warner

Rating: ●●●●●

WHEN HALI-FAX-BASED chanteuse Jenn Grant released her critically acclaimed debut in 2007, much of Canada's music establishment thought they discovered another Feist. But while Orchestra for The Moon featured plenty of Leslie-like moments, her follow-up is definitely Grant all the way. Echoes is filled with quiet



Jenn Grant's new album Echoes was released this week.

folk, soft, soothing vocals and even a memorable Neil Young cover (Only Love Can Break Your Heart). Although her tunes aren't as

well executed as Feist's, she's definitely got something that could, one day, put her in the same league.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

The Fray

Album: The Fray

Label: Epic/Sony Music

Rating: ●●●

IN AN IDEAL world, talent would equate with record sales, but we all know that reality is just a pipe dream. The Fray are one platinum selling act that prove bland, uninspiring tunes are all you need to sell records. On the band's third effort they produce watered down Coldplay-like piano ballads and thoughtless über-mainstream rock; perfect for Grey's Anatomy episode, but not so great for anyone who actually likes listening to music.

Bryan Borzykowski/for Metro Canada

Dierks Bentley

Album: Feel The Fire

Label: EMI

Rating: ●●●●

DIERKS BENTLEY continues to work a successful formula — a blend of hard-drinking outlaw country rock for the crackers (Life On The Run), bedroom ballads for the womenfolk (I Wanna Make You Close Your Eyes) and some bluegrass banjo. The guitar jams are more extended, ballads more heartfelt and the pickin' a little prettier.

Graham Rockingham/for Metro Canada

Listen to this week's reviewed music by following links at metronews.ca/music

HA	H	D	B	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
2/5/09	31	31	31	ABC	News (N)	ABC Wld News	Inside Edition	Chronicle	Ugly Betty "Kissed Off"	Grey's Anatomy (N)		Practice
	7	7	7	ASN	The Road to Avonlea		Instant Star	TMZ (N)	Law & Order: Criminal Intent	Eleventh Hour "Surge"		Practice
	11	11	11	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	The Nature of Things (N)		Doc Zone (HDTV) (N)	CBC News: The National		The Hour
	2	2	2	CBC-F	Terre humaine	Pyramide (SC)	Virginie (SC)	Infoman (SC)	Enquête (HDTV) (SC)	M pour musique (N) (SC)		Le Téléjournal
	32	32	32	CBS	News (N)	Evening News	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Big Bang Th	How I Met	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	Eleventh Hour
	69	69	69	CFTM	TVA 18 heures	Le Cercle (SC)	Petit monde de Laura Cadieux		La Classe de 5e (N)	Taxi 0-22 (SC)	Caméra café	TVA 22 heures
	6	6	6	CIHF	Entertainment	ET Canada	The Unit "Inquisition"		Bones (HDTV PA) (N)	The Office (N)	The Office	News (N)
	9	9	9	CJCH	etalk	Hollywood	ER (HDTV) (N)		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	Grey's Anatomy (N)		News (N)
	10	10	10	ELTV	(6) EastLink Television				Podium TV		EastLink Television	
	36	36	36	FOX	Deal-No Deal	The Simpsons	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	Bones (HDTV PA) (N)	Hell's Kitchen (N)		Fox First
primetime	12	12	12	NBC	News (N)	NBC News	Hollywood	Extra (N)	Name Is Earl	Kath & Kim (N)	30 Rock	(11:01) ER
	29	29	29	NW	World News	Business	CBC News	Newman	The Hour		CBC News: The National	Supercar
	4	4	4	PBS-B	NewsHour With Jim Lehrer	Greater Boston	Basic Black	American Future: A History	This Old Hse.	Yankee Shop	Ask This Old	Michigan
	35	35	35	PBS-D	NewsHour With Jim Lehrer	Business Rpt.	Worldfocus	American Future: A History	Ask This Old	Michigan	Conquistadors	
	68	68	68	TQS	(6:30) Le Retour (SC)	Grande fille	Un monde bête	La Menace du tigre (2007, Suspense)	Gary Busey.		110 pour cent	
	23	96	96	BNN	Business News	Headline	Market Call	Commodities	GetConnected	Business News	Squeeze Play	Market Call
	18	18	18	CNN	(5) The Situation Room	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown: No Bias	Larry King Live		Cooper 360	
	54	54	54	GOLF	Golf Central	Tiger Woods	Tee It	Tee It	PGA Tour Golf Buick Invitational -- First Round.			
	52	52	52	RSE	Prime Time Sports	Air Racing		PartyPoker.net World Open IV	Best Damn Sports Show		Sportsnet Con.	
	55	55	55	SCOR	Hockey Talk	Game On	Score Update	Canadian Poker Tour	Poker Million Pound Challenge.		Score Tonight	
news	45	45	45	SPD	NASCAR Media Day: 2009 Preview	(HDTV) (N)		Bud Shootout Selection Show (HDTV) (Live)		Dave Despain on Assignment		
	53	53	53	TSN	Off the Record	SportsCentre	NHL Hockey Boston Bruins at Ottawa Senators. (HDTV) (Live)			NHL Hockey		
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	44	44	44	TOON	Ben 10	Johnny Test	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Futurama	Robot Chicken
	26	26	26	TREE	Max & Ruby	Backyardigans	Ni Hao, Kai-lan	Nght Grdn	Toot & Puddle	Franklin	Little Bear	Maggie-Beast
	27	27	27	YTV	Drake & Josh	iCarly	H2O, Just Add	Prank Patrol	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	In The Real World	Falcon Beach
	16	16	16	A&E	The First 48		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV)		The First 48 (HDTV) (N)	The Beast (N)
	70	70	70	APTN	News	Suaangan	Wapos Bay	By the Rapids	renegadeexpress	Red Planet ★ (2000, Science Fiction)		
	50	50	50	BET	106 & Park: BET's Top 10 Live (Live)		Hair Show ★ (2004, Comedy) Mo'Nique, Kellita Smith, Gina Torres.			Baldwin Hills		
	37	37	37	BRVO	Street Legal		Camera	Snapshot	Bathroom Divas-Opera Star	Flicker (2008, Documentary) Premiere.		
family	25	25	25	CMT	Bon Jovi: One	CMT 4 Tracks	Weddings	Hollywood	Home Improve.	Reba	Reba	Hope & Faith
	49	49	49	COM	Laughs	Comedy Now	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park
	153	153	153	COURT	Truth, Duty, Valour		World's Wildest	Police Videos	Cops Uncut	Dumb Criminal	Aggro "Losing It"	Police Videos
	38	38	38	DISC	How It's Made	How It's Made	Daily Planet (N)		Destroyed	Destroyed	Destroyed	MythBusters
	34	48	48	HGTV	Holmes on Homes		House Hunters	Property Virgin	Holmes on Homes	The Fix	Disaster DIY	Home to Flip
	46	46	46	HIST	Deep Wreck Mysteries		NCIS "Brothers in Arms"		Lost Worlds	Deep Wreck Mysteries		NCIS
	17	17	17	MM	Gone Wild	Brooke Knows	Pimp My Ride	Pimp My Ride	America's Best Dance Crew	America's Best Dance Crew		Punk'd
	19	19	19	MMM	MusicProfile	mmmtop10.com		Back In	Behind the Music	Listed		Confessions
	201	201	201	M1	(6:30) The Last Winter		(8:15) Emotional Arithmetic (2007, Drama), Roy Dupuis			Where in the World Is Osama bin Laden?		
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cable variety	51	51	51	PEACH	Seinfeld	Friends	House-Payne	House-Payne	Friends	Friends	Friends	The Cookout
	206	206	206	PIX	Lapse of Mem.		The Wild Bunch ★★★ (1969, Western) William Holden, Robert Ryan.			Friday the 13th Part 3 ★ (1982, Horror)		
	67	67	67	RDI	RDI en direct	RDI en direct	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)	Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI en direct
	39	39	39	SHOW	Wife Swap		The Outer Limits		Love-Death	Love-Death	Trailer Park	Trailer Park
	40	40	40	SLICE	X-Weighted "Jocelyn"		Til Debt-Part	Rich Poor	Bulging Brides	Bulging Brides	Last 10	Biggest Loser
	47	47	47	SPACE	Stargate SG-1		Rabbit Fall	Rabbit Fall	Lost "Confidence Man"		Star Trek: Voyager	Chuck (HDTV)
	14	14	14	SPIKE	CSI: NY (HDTV)		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		TNA IMPACT! (HDTV) (N)	
	57	98	98	STAR	etalk	Hollywood	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		TMZ (N)	etalk	Sexiest Body Parts	Tonight Show
	21	21	21	TLC	What Not to Wear		Sports Disasters (HDTV)		Overhaulin' (HDTV)		Street Customs (N)	Heli-Loggers
	56	34	34	TROP	What Happen?	What Happen?	Make or Break	Naked Fashion	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Raymond	Family Guy
251	20	20	20	TV5	Que.-champion	Journal de Fr2	Fourchette et sac à dos		Club social		Complément d'enquête	
	28	28	28	V	Mysterious Island		Murder, She Wrote		Wait for God	'Allo, 'Allo	La Bamba ★★★ (1987, Biography)	
	60	97	97	VIVA	Mysterious Ways		Judging Amy		Most Haunted	Most Haunted		Passion
	22	22	22	W	Style by Jury	Style by Jury	Will & Grace	Friends	Divine Design	House	Confidential	Save Us-House
	251	251	251	WGN	Be-Millionaire	Evening News	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	Smallville "Requiem" (N)	Supernatural (HDTV) (N)		WGN News

critics'corner

Flicker
The colors, man! This new documentary tells the story of artist and mystic Brion Gysin, who invented a device called the dream machine. Made from a light bulb, a simple motor and a rotating cylinder adorned with cutouts, it was designed to alter one's consciousness and stimulate visions without drugs. Singer Marianne Faithfull, rocker Iggy Pop, filmmaker Kenneth Anger and musician Genesis P-Orridge are among those interviewed about Gysin and his machine. 10 PM on BRAVO



The Nature of Things
Our cities need work; that's not news. But what should be done, and why aren't our leaders doing it? Those are the questions raised in the new episode "Living City: A Critical Guide." Urban affairs commentator Christopher Hume compares our forefathers' early visions for our cities with the reality of today and uses animation to sketch out a new vision for the 21st century. 8 PM on CBC

Doc Zone
It would help if their pants really did catch fire. The new documentary "The Truth About Liars" brings science and sociology to bear on lying and cheating — why people do it and why some people do it compulsively. It also includes some "news you can use": tips on how to tell whether someone is lying. 9 PM on CBC

Batman producer off to Damascus

MOVIES Robert Stone's 1998 novel Damascus Gate, a thriller involving a journalist and a group of extremists in modern-day Jerusalem, is being developed as a feature film. Charles Roven, the producer behind The Dark Knight, is developing the project with collaborator Richard Suckle. REUTERS

In brief

TV BET has acquired broadcast rights to Dough Boys, the debut film from Preston Whitmore's Give Back Raise Up Program, through which he finances and produces low-budget pictures showcasing newcomers in front of and behind the camera.

MOVIES Abby Kohn and Marc Silverstein, who wrote the screenplay for New Line Cinema's romantic comedy He's Just Not That Into You, have been signed to pen Valentine's Day for the studio. The love story revolves around five relationships in Los Angeles. REUTERS

HollywoodRants

Steve Gow

Read his blog at metronews.ca



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Simon Cowell uses special make-up to appear flawless on TV, femalefirst.co.uk reports. Cowell reportedly insists his make-up artist uses cosmetics which hide his imperfections on high definition TV. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Celebrity Buzz

Cruise says he's a big fan of car racing

INTERESTS Tom Cruise still feels the need for speed, people.com reports. The actor, 46, shares his love of NASCAR and racing in a new interview set to air Friday on ESPN2. "For me as a kid growing up, I always wanted to race cars," says Cruise, who starred in the 1990 racing film *Days of Thunder*. NASCAR, he says, "is a very unique kind of racing that feels very American."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Cruz plans karaoke for Oscar night

CELEBRATING Win or lose on Oscar night, best supporting actress nominee Penelope Cruz says she plans to celebrate after the show with karaoke, usmagazine.com reports. "I'm sure I will. You know I'm a big fan of karaoke," she said on the *Ellen DeGeneres Show*. "I have one at home," Cruz says. "I even do it alone sometimes." Her favorite song? "I do a lot of Eminem, *Around the Outside*," Cruz says. "That's one of my favorites. Yeah, but that (Oscar) night, whatever happens, (we're) going to have to do some karaoke."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Former manager sues Britney and her parents

LAWSUITS Britney Spears' former manager Sam Lutfi is suing the singer and her parents, Jamie and Lynne Spears, for defamation and breach of contract, L.A. court documents show, people.com reports.

In the lawsuit filed Tuesday, Lutfi is also claiming libel, battery and intentional infliction of emotional distress. "Jamie and Lynne launched a campaign of lies and intimidation designed to destroy Lutfi and drive him out of Britney's life," the papers read.

"This campaign also provided Jamie with the opportunity he needed to obtain an appoint-

ment as Britney's conservator."

Additionally, the lawsuit alleges: "Despite seemingly accomplishing their objectives, Jamie and Lynne have nevertheless continued their smear campaign against Lutfi. Thus, having no other alternative, Lutfi brings this action to defend himself against Jamie's and Lynne's persistent attacks."

Last Friday, Britney's father obtained a

new restraining order against Lutfi, accusing him of harassing the Spears family.

Lutfi, who says he became Spears' manager after the two met in an L.A. nightclub in 2007, claims his reputation was damaged by Lynne Spears' book, *Through the Storm*, in which she makes allegations about Lutfi's control over her daughter. He calls the allegations "lies and fabrication."

Lutfi's attorney, Bryan J. Freedman said in a statement Tuesday that there is "overwhelming evidence from independent witnesses" proving his client's case and that "at the time of the trial in this action, the jury will have an opportunity to weigh the credibility of the witnesses."

Lawyers for Jamie Spears weren't immediately available for comment.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Four Aussie film stars to appear on stamps

HONOURS Nicole Kidman, Russell Crowe, Cate Blanchett and Geoffrey Rush all have Oscars in common, and now each member of the Australian quartet can boast another distinction: They all appear on special edition postage stamps in their na-

tive country, people.com reports. "Something like this — when you see your face on a stamp — says 'wow,'" Kidman, 41, told the BBC. She's particularly delighted that her children will one day "lick a stamp, put it on an envelope

and say, 'That's my mum.'" Blanchett, 39, said the honour made her feel "utterly, deeply humbled ... I'm going to be licked by millions of Australians and I can't wait." The stamps show each star in two guises: In character for their Oscar-winning roles and as their glamorous selves. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Joaquin insists he's serious about his new music career

REINVENTIONS Joaquin Phoenix insists he's getting a bum rap, people.com reports. "There's not a hoax," Phoenix tells the Associated Press of doubts about his sudden conversation from movie star to hip-hop artist.

"Might I be ridiculous?

Might my career in music be laughable? Yeah, that's possible, but that's certainly not my intention."

Questions about his intentions surfaced after the newly bearded Phoenix, 34, took the stage in Las Vegas on Jan. 16 in an ill-fated debut of his new career. A

video of his performance shows him falling off the stage, though he says it looks worse than it was.

"I had a lot of dudes come up and say, 'We really respect you for doing it, putting yourself out there,

and going with it,'" he says. "Because I think true hip-hop heads know that it's hard, it's going to be a hard transition, and people are going to be lining up just to make fun of me." **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Simpsons 'like family' to stylist

FRIENDSHIP At Ken Pavés' new luxury salon in Las Vegas, the Hollywood hairstylist-to-the-stars tells In Touch that the Simpson sisters are "like family" and that he will soon debut a salon in the Lone Star state, just for Jessica. "She wants me to open a salon in Texas," says Pavés, referring to his No. 1 client and best friend Jessica Simpson.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Satriani lawyers warn Coldplay

MUSIC Chris Martin and his Coldplay band-mates better be looking over their shoulders when they show up for the Grammys this weekend. Lawyers for Joe Satriani are planning an ambush since the band has so far dodged getting served with a plagiarism lawsuit.

"We have warned their British lawyers that we have hired a fleet of process servers lined up to dog the band everywhere they go this week-

end in the hopes of serving them," says Howard King, Satriani's lawyer.

At issue? Satriani claims the band ripped off a melody from one of his songs for their Grammy-nominated hit *Viva La Vida*.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Is Madonna trying to make A-Rod jealous?

DATING Femalefirst.co.uk is suggesting that Madonna is reportedly dating a Brazilian model to make Alex Rodriguez jealous.

The 50-year-old singer, who has been romantically linked to Alex and Jesus Luz since her split from husband Guy Ritchie, is keen to show Alex what he is missing by not fully committing to her, the website reports.

A source told the New York Daily News newspaper: "Madonna likes to be in control, and she hasn't been able to completely control Alex yet."

"Jesus has been much

more attentive than Alex recently. If A-Rod will commit to Madonna, then he'll win her affections. But it's not like he's giving her a diamond ring. Neither he nor Madonna is 100 per cent committed to each other yet."

Baseball player Rodriguez, 33, is furious Madonna has been spotted out with 22-year-old Jesus, claiming it has damaged his reputation. The source added: "Alex is well aware that Madonna is out and about with Jesus, and he isn't happy about it. It's embarrassing for him because he and Madonna have been so publicly linked, and now it looks like he's been dumped for a younger stud."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Clarkson says she's not gay

RUMOURS Get it straight: Kelly Clarkson isn't gay, usmagazine reports. "I get that all the time," she tells AOL's pop culture news site, PopEater.com. "People are like, 'Are you secretly a lesbian? Because I'd really love it.'"

"Lesbians tell it to me all the time," she goes on. "I'm like, 'I'm glad it works for you, and I wish I liked women like that because

often times, men are very hard for me, but I happen to like boys.'" Clarkson goes on to say she "could never be a lesbian. I would never want to date (someone like) myself, ever. I'm a crazy person. I need some kind of stable, quiet man."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Hilary strikes back at Faye

CATFIGHT Hilary Duff is set to reprise Faye Dunaway's legendary role as Bonnie in the indie remake of *The Story of Bonnie and Clyde* — and Dunaway is not pleased, usmagazine reports. "Couldn't they have at least cast

a real actress?" Dunaway said last week.

Duff retaliated against Dunaway Tuesday. "I think that my fans that are going to go see the movie don't even know who she is, so you know..." she told E!.

"I think it was a little unnecessary but I might be mad if I looked like that now too."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sarah staying put for money?

RELATIONSHIP Even with rumours swirling that Matthew Broderick cheated on her and their marriage is on the rocks, Sarah Jessica Parker is reportedly in no hurry to get a divorce.

The reason? She's afraid of losing any part of her multi-million-dollar fortune, according to *Look* magazine.

"Sarah's family were poor when she was a child," a source tells

the magazine.

"She had seven brothers and sisters and she's often talked about missing out on birthday presents when she was young. It seems she's freaking out over the thought that Matthew could walk away with an enormous sum of money."

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